UNITED
NATIONS

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Economic and Social Council

Distr.
LIMITED

E/CN.17/1996/L.20
1 May 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
Fourth session
18 April-3 May 1996
Agenda item 6 (a)

REVIEW OF SECTORAL CLUSTERS: PROTECTION OF THE ATMOSPHERE (AGENDA 21, CHAPTER 9) AND PROTECTION OF THE OCEANS AND ALL KINDS OF SEAS (AGENDA 21, CHAPTER 17)

Draft decision submitted by the Chairman

International cooperation and coordination

1. The Commission on Sustainable Development, in order to enhance implementation of the commitment set forth in section F of chapter 17 of Agenda 21 to promote regular intergovernmental review and consideration, within the United Nations system, of general marine and coastal issues, including environment and development matters, agrees on the need:

(a) To better identify priorities for action at the global level to promote conservation and sustainable use of the marine environment;

(b) For better coordination among the relevant United Nations organizations and intergovernmental financial institutions;

(c) To ensure sound scientific, environmental, economic and social advice on these issues.

2. The Commission therefore recommends that the Economic and Social Council approve the following conclusions as regards addressing these issues, subject to the outcome of the special session of the General Assembly in 1997 at which the Assembly will, inter alia, decide on the future work programme of the Commission:

(a) There should be a periodic overall review by the Commission of all aspects of the marine environment and its related issues, as described in chapter 17 of Agenda 21, and for which the overall legal framework is provided

by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. 1/ This review should cover other chapters and provisions of Agenda 21 directly related to the marine environment. This review should draw upon reports from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and those of other relevant United Nations bodies and international organizations in their respective fields, coordinated by the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas. Other modalities for the review should be decided by the Commission on Sustainable Development. The results of such reviews should be considered by the General Assembly under an agenda item entitled "Oceans and the Law of the Sea";

(b) In order to address the need for improved coordination, the Secretary-General should be invited to review the working of the ACC Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas, with a view to improving its status and effectiveness, including the need for closer inter-agency links between, inter alia, the secretariat of the Subcommittee and UNEP;

(c) The Secretary-General and the executive heads of the agencies and organizations of the United Nations system sponsoring the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Pollution (GESAMP) should be invited to review the Group's terms of reference, composition and methods of work, with a view to improving its effectiveness and comprehensiveness while maintaining its status as a source of agreed, independent scientific advice.

1/ Official Records of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, vol. XVII (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.84.V.3), document A/CONF.62/122.